

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended) A gas generator comprising an elongated outer housing (10) that has end faces and a tubular side wall,

at least three gas generating stages (12, 14, 16; 112, 114, 116, 118) which can be activated independently of each other, and

~~for~~ each stage (12, 14, 16; 112, 114, 116, 118) having an associated igniter unit (32, 34, 36; 132, 134, 136, 138),

said igniter units (32, 34, 36; 132, 134, 136, 138) being mounted laterally to said tubular side wall of said outer housing (10).

Claim 2 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that said igniter units (32, 34, 36; 132, 134, 136, 138) are provided so as to extend radially from said outer housing (10).

Claim 3 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that said igniter units (32, 34, 36; 132, 134, 136, 138) are identical in construction.

Claim 4 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that said igniter units (32, 34, 36; 132, 134, 136, 138) all have an identical orientation with respect to said outer housing.

Claim 5 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that each igniter unit (32, 34, 36; 132, 134, 136, 138) has rear, electrical contacts (48) facing away from said outer housing (10).

Claim 6 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that said outer housing (10) has a passage opening (52) for each igniter unit (32, 34, 36; 132, 134, 136, 138) and outlet openings (64) for generated gas for each stage (12, 14, 16; 112, 114, 116, 118), said passage opening (52) and said outlet openings (64) being arranged in diametrically opposite regions of said outer housing (10).

Claim 7 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that said stages (12, 14, 16; 112, 114, 116, 118) are formed by associated combustion chambers (22, 24, 26; 122, 124, 126, 128) filled with solid propellant (40).

Claim 8 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that said outer housing (10) is modular in construction, by at least one stage (14, 114, 116), lying between axially outer stages, having an outer housing section formed by a tubular part.

Claim 9 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 8, characterized in that disc-shaped, axial dividing walls (80) are provided between said outer housing sections.

Claim 10 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 9, characterized in that all said axial dividing walls (80) have the same geometry and dimensions.

Claim 11 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that it has three stages (12, 14, 16), a gas generating output of which amounts to approximately $1/7$, $2/7$ and $4/7$ of a total gas generating output of said gas generator.

Claim 12 (Original) The gas generator according to claims 1, characterized in that it has four stages (112, 114, 116, 118), a gas generating output of which amounts to approximately 7%, 13%, 27% and 53% of a total gas generating output of said gas generator.

Claim 13 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that at least two stages (12, 14, 16; 112, 114, 116, 118) have at least one of different gas generating outputs, solid propellant (40) of different geometry and different charge mixtures.

Claim 14 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that said igniter units have igniter housings

(42) which, viewed transversely to a longitudinal extent of said gas generator, are arranged asymmetrically to said outer housing (10).

Claim 15 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that said igniter units have igniter housings (42) which, viewed transversely to a longitudinal extent of said gas generator, are arranged asymmetrically to each other.

Claim 16 (Original) The gas generator according to claim 1, characterized in that said igniter have associated igniter housings (42) which are constructed as fastening means for arresting said gas generator in a module.

Claim 17 (New) A gas generator comprising:

an elongated outer housing (10) that has end faces and a side wall extending between said end faces;

at least three gas generating stages (12, 14, 16; 112, 114, 116, 118) which can be activated independently of each other to generate gas; and

each stage (12, 14, 16; 112, 114, 116, 118) having a source of gas in said housing which source when activated produces gas, each stage also having an associated igniter unit (32, 34, 36; 132, 134, 136, 138) for activating an associated gas source, said igniter units (32, 34, 36; 132, 134, 136, 138) being mounted on said side wall of said outer housing (10) and spaced apart from said end faces and spaced apart from each other.

Claim 18 (New) The gas generator according to claim 17, wherein each of said igniter units is mounted on said side wall of said outer housing (10) such that the longitudinal axis of each of the igniter units is perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the outer housing.

Claim 19 (New) The gas generator of claim 17, wherein all of the distances between adjacent igniter units are not the same.

Claim 20 (New) The gas generator according to claim 17, wherein each of said igniter units comprises an igniter, wherein the entire igniter for each of said igniter units is spaced apart outwardly from said side wall of said outer housing.